

Will the broadcast flag interfere with consumers ability to make copies of DTV content for their personal use, either on personal video recorders or removable media?

If it doesn't interfere with copying then what is the point of flagging the signal? If the broadcast industry can't force every manufacturer of CE and IT equipment that can demodulate the signal to follow this scheme, then it is useless.

Would the digital flag interfere with consumers ability to send DTV content across networks, such as home digital networks connecting digital set top boxes, digital recorders, digital servers and digital display devices? Of courses it would. That is the whole point of it.

Would the broadcast flag requirement limit consumers ability to use their existing electronic equipment (equipment not built to look for the flag) or make it difficult to use older components with new equipment that is compliant with the broadcast flag standard?

An old demodulator would ignore the flag, but it would make attaching existing technologies to new demodulators that check for the flag impossible. It would be a compatibility nightmare.

Would a broadcast flag requirement limit the development of future equipment providing consumers with new options?

If their intent is to protect their content, why don't they encrypt it? It seems to me that scheme will work to limit the future direction of personal CE and IT technical development more than it will protect DTV content from piracy.

Hard-core pirates will acquire special equipment or modify off-the-shelf equipment to get around this rather simplistic copy protection scheme.

This 'flag-detection' method will only impact the common consumer. Making their existing equipment obsolete and dictating which manufactures they can buy equipment from.

What will be the cost impact, if any, that a broadcast flag requirement would have on consumer electronics equipment?

It will increase the design cost of any existing or future equipment that might attach to any kind of digital network.

Also it will keep prices of DTV and HDTV equipment higher, and increase compatibility problems between different components. This will slow the adoption of this new technology by consumers.

Other Comments:

I understand why the broadcast industry wants to protect themselves against piracy. Digital piracy is a serious problem.

This proposal would do more to dictate what new equipment could be invented and what equipment consumers could use in their homes than it would to protect broadcast content.

If the industry is going to broadcast in the clear, then ultimately there is nothing they can do to prevent pirates from demodulating the signal and recording it to digital media. The people that proposed this plan know that.

In light of that fact, this effort seems to be more directed at controlling future technical developments in consumer electronics and home networking than anything else.